

J.M. + J.T.

C A R M E L

In the City of Brotherly Love

When in the summer of 1895, a young girl knelt, between her mother and young brother, in private audience, at the feet of Pope Leo XIII and told of her intention to become a Discalced Carmelite, the venerable Pontiff, placing his hand on her head in blessing said: "If it be God's Will, my child," the same words he had spoken eight years before to young Teresa Martin, now known as St. Teresa of the Child Jesus. Did the far-sighted saintly Leo XIII, looking into the eyes of the earnest woman before him, see in her vocation not only one life dedicated to God but the establishment of a monastery destined to become one of the most flourishing in the United States and which in due time would give birth to other Carmels founded in various parts of the country? We do not know what the Holy Pontiff's thoughts were at that audience but the concrete result of the vocation of Mary Otillia McGeogh is visible today in the beautiful Carmelite Monastery of Philadelphia and its daughter Carmels of Louisville, Kentucky, Rochester, New York, Mobile, Alabama, and Savannah, Georgia.

Shortly after her return from Europe, Mary McGeogh's twenty-first birthday left her free to embrace the austere life of Carmel for which she had been longing but until then was unable to follow because of the opposition of her grandfather who, since the death of her father, had been her legal guardian. The departure of this beautiful, talented and cultured young girl for the Carmel of Boston aroused interest in the Catholic circles of her native city where the Order of Carmel was almost unknown and much misunderstood. This interest soon bore fruit in the hearts of other young girls who felt drawn to a similar life of prayer and mortification. Before Miss McGeogh, who became Sister Xavier of the Angels, completed her novitiate the Boston Carmel was receiving many applications for admission from Philadelphians. Four were accepted and others held under consideration.

The interest of Philadelphians in Carmel seemed to indicate a monastery of the order would flourish in the City of Brotherly Love and Mrs. Mary McGeogh, Sr. Xavier's mother, a devout woman possessed of much executive ability, set to work energetically, endeavoring to make Carmel known to all her friends among the clergy and laity. As far back as 1852 when the Blessed John N. Neumann, the Redemptorist confessor of the Carmelite nuns in Baltimore, was appointed fourth Bishop of Philadelphia, the idea of a Carmelite Monastery in his episcopal city was projected, but Divine Providence ordained that the holy prelate's desire should bear fruit only a half century later. Even then the hidden life of Carmel had little appeal for the average Catholic and for many priests. Everywhere the need for the various forms of apostolic life was evident -- but Philadelphia was a conservative city. Undaunted, Mrs. McGeogh persevered in her efforts. Archbishop Ryan, although in favor of the proposal, gave no encouragement to its immediate execution. However, when in 1901, Mrs. McGeogh's father, Mr. Joseph Penn, offered to give a house for the Foundation, the Archbishop gladly forwarded his consent

and warmly invited the Carmelites of Boston to establish a monastery in his diocese.

On July 25th, 1902, the Prioress of Boston Carmel, the indefatigable Mother Beatrix of the Holy Spirit, accompanied the four nuns destined for the new Foundation to Philadelphia and on the following day, Feast of St. Anne, the Most Rev. Archbishop offered the first Mass in the little temporary monastery of St. Joseph and St. Anne at 1518 Poplar Street.

Archbishop Ryan had hurried home from a business trip to Chicago in order to preside at the opening of the little Carmel to which he ever proved himself a most beloved father. In his discourse to the assembled faithful, he expressed his happiness at welcoming the Carmelite nuns to his diocese. He had long wished the Church might have her full equipment in the City of Brotherly Love. Here were people who filled to overflowing the Catholic churches. Here were priests, secular and regular, and all kinds of Sisters to attend the needs, spiritual, intellectual and physical, of the ever-growing Catholic Community. But something was wanting. Philadelphia had no strictly contemplative order. Philadelphia had many Marthas but it needed Marys. Now, as he welcomed the Marys most heartily in the name of priests and people, Archbishop Ryan felt the Church of Philadelphia was complete in all branches of divine service.

Thus inaugurated under the warmest welcome of both clergy and laity the Monastery of Discalced Carmelites began its life as part of the great archdiocese of Philadelphia. The temporary monastery, a typical old city twin row house with a small side yard, was situated in the Gesu parish and in compensation for the limitations of space and privacy the nuns had the devoted support of the Gesu parishioners, as well as of many others, and also the spiritual assistance of the Jesuit Fathers. A young secular priest on sick leave, formerly of the Boston diocese, the Rev. John J. Moore, was appointed Chaplain, and for twenty-five years, until his death, his punctual daily Mass was an inspiration to the community while his Sunday afternoon sermons attracted an ever-increasing congregation of the faithful. For many years he was also a most zealous spiritual director for the Tertiaries of Carmel.

The early history of this Carmel is best told in the lives of those elect souls chosen by God to be the spiritual foundation stones of a community destined to serve, as a living prayer and sacrifice, the needs of one of the greatest archdioceses of the world, geographically covering an area of 5,043 square miles. Now comprising solely the metropolitan area of Philadelphia (prior to 1961, it included the present Diocese of Allentown, Penna.), it numbers slightly less than one and half million souls ministered to by 1,800 priests and approximately 7,000 religious Sisters and Brothers.\*

The first Prioress, Mother Gertrude of the Heart of Jesus, the only one of the four foundresses not a native Philadelphian, had nevertheless been educated in the suburb of Sharon Hill at the Academy of the Sisters of the Holy Child. Highly endowed by nature and training, she possessed natural and supernatural qualities which preeminently fitted

\*within an area of 2,182 square miles.



her to establish a Carmelite monastery in the sweetly austere spirit of her holy Mother St. Teresa.

The daughter of James A. McMaster, the well-known convert and intrepid editor of the Freeman's Journal, who fought valiantly for God and His Church, Mother Gertrude had early been taught to deny nature, to love the will of God above all things, and to aspire after perfection. Her extraordinary father had always lifted the souls of his children to higher things and his noble wife was animated by the same spirit. God blessed this truly Catholic home by not only calling the three daughters to the religious life, but by destining two to become foundresses and first Prioresses of Carmelite monasteries (Philadelphia and Brooklyn) and a third to fill one of the highest offices in the Society of the Holy Child.

Mrs. McMaster was a woman of rare intelligence and highly cultivated talents, and until her death, when Gertrude was eleven, she directed the education of her children with such thoroughness that they were well advanced for their years in the ordinary branches of study to which she added the simple domestic arts. After her untimely death their studies were completed under the Sisters of the Holy Child. At eighteen Gertrude returned home to take charge of her father's house and for seven years she graciously provided for his domestic happiness, proving herself an ideal hostess to his numerous distinguished visitors. Her older sister had entered the Sisters of the Holy Child and her younger sister the Carmelite monastery of Baltimore, but Gertrude generously stilled her own desires of consecrating her life to God, thinking it her duty to remain with her father until his death.

One night she was awakened by an interior voice which made known to her most clearly that she must follow her vocation. She arose to pray and as she did the way was made clear. The sacrifice meant the breaking up of her father's home and it rent her heart, but her generosity was even surpassed by that of her noble father who thanked God that He had allowed him to make such a sacrifice in his old age. Like another Abraham, he not only brought his child to the Carmel of Baltimore but lifted her over the threshold himself, thus making a free and generous offering to God.

Gertrude, who became Sister Gertrude of the Heart of Jesus, gave herself wholeheartedly to the life of Carmel, rejoicing as a giant to run in the way of perfection. Five years later she was chosen to be one of the foundresses of the Carmel in Boston where she labored with self-sacrificing zeal and devotedness for the community, all the while giving herself intensely to a deep interior life. She was so drawn to imitate her Divine Spouse in His hidden life of humble subjection that when she was appointed to found the new Carmel of Philadelphia she was grieved to be withdrawn from the humble obedience whose value she knew so well. But she threw herself generously into the work with her characteristic ardor and energy and while governing her community with all the skill and tact demanded by her office, she kept her soul as submissive and humble to those who directed her spiritual life, as when a young religious.

It was necessary for the Carmel destined to bear such abundant fruits to be planted firmly in the solid foundation of the Cross and although the entire community

shared the sufferings of those early days, the shadow of the Cross completely enveloped Mother Gertrude's remaining years. Her delicate health was undermined by severe illnesses which several times brought her to death's door, yet each time she recovered to labor and suffer still longer. Others in the community were attacked by severe illnesses; promising aspirants could not or did not persevere; there were misunderstandings with persons whose good intentions exceeded their knowledge of the life of Carmel and its requirements; difficulties about property and building; and, last but not least, there were interior trials of every description. Filled with zeal for the honor of her Divine Spouse and the salvation of souls, especially of His anointed ones, she strove to repair the injury of grave scandals by offering herself as a victim to appease Divine Justice, and to obtain grace for the erring ones. Her generous oblation must have been accepted by God for, until the end of her life, she was never without pain and suffering.

Mention has already been made of the second foundress, Sister Xavier of the Angels; the others, Sister Stanislaus of the Blessed Sacrament, and Sister Mary of St. Joseph, also very chosen souls, have well been compared to a lily and a violet. Both grew up in the bosom of truly Christian families where God always held the first place, and where piety and devotion to duty were carefully inculcated. Both were educated by the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur, and were directed in the spiritual life by Jesuit Fathers. Of her childhood, Sr. Stanislaus later wrote in some verses to the Sacred Heart:

"...the while our young hearts beat  
With joy unstained by malice; of sin we hardly knew,  
The Holy Spirit locked our hearts to all, dear Lord, but You."  
And the same might well be said about Sr. Mary. Both rather knew not this world than forsook it.

Sr. Stanislaus entered the Carmel of Boston at seventeen, a year after she applied for admission. The delay was thought prudent because of her delicate health and age. From her childhood her desire to consecrate herself to God in the religious life was so ardent that her confessors had to moderate it as well as her self-imposed penances. She made her profession on the Feast of St. John of the Cross, November 24, 1897, and two weeks later, her childhood playmate, Mary Joseph Daily, was admitted as a postulant and soon became Sister Mary of St. Joseph.

Although at that time temporary vows were not made, the young professed sisters remained in the novitiate for at least two years after profession. Thus from the earliest days of their religious life Sr. Stanislaus and Sr. Mary ascended the spiritual Mount of Carmel side by side, yet each in her own way. Both were full of zeal for the Foundation of Carmel in their native city and prayed much for its success. Convinced that God was calling them to that work they nevertheless would have been happy to remain in the home of their profession had their superiors so decreed.

Sr. Stanislaus lived closely united to her Divine Spouse especially in the Mystery of His Holy Infancy. Her intercourse with Little Jesus was very loving and



familiar. She walked in His company. They worked together. When she was made Turn Sister she placed herself under the protection of Little Jesus, Whose statue was over the Turn. Before answering the bell she begged Him to speak to the person, placing upon her lips the message He wished to convey. This was the secret of her wonderful influence for good there. The words she spoke went right to the hearts of her listeners and brought forth marvelous fruit. Our Lord chose this innocent child, who knew not the taint of the world, to be the means of converting many from their sinful ways. Persons who had been away from the sacraments for years, others leading sinful lives, came and felt the influence of grace when she spoke. They turned to the Lord, and went to confession and persevered in a good life.

One of the first copies of the Life of Soeur Therese de Lisieux, now known as St. Teresa of the Child Jesus or the Little Flower of Jesus, was received by the Boston Carmel. It edified the entire community but made the deepest impression on Sr. Stanislaus. She studied the life, absorbed its spirit, and henceforth she and Teresa were one heart and soul. She was one of "Little Teresa's" first conquests, one of the first of that "Legion of Little Souls" St. Teresa wished to bring to the good God.

Sr. Stanislaus brought to Philadelphia the devotion to "Little Teresa," until then unknown here. She tried to inculcate it by every means in her power. Relics were obtained from Lisieux and given to the sick and suffering and many were the favors obtained. By degrees the love of Little Teresa grew in the hearts of the people until Philadelphia became a great center of devotion to her.

Sr. Stanislaus translated the additions to the French life of Little Teresa and a friend had them printed. The young man who set the type was so moved by the beautiful sentiments expressed that, by the grace of God, he was converted from a life of sin and dissipation. He made his peace with God, renounced his evil habits and some years later died a holy death, protesting that he owed all his happiness to Little Teresa.

In 1904 the community had outgrown its cradle on Poplar Street and moved to a larger house at 44th and Spruce Streets where they acquired sufficient property for their future monastery. However, the location did not prove favorable for a permanent monastery, so in 1910 the beautiful estate known as "Hill Top" in the suburb of Oak Lane was purchased as the ideal site for the future monastery. It was especially during the six years in West Philadelphia that Sr. Stanislaus' influence at the Turn became widespread and there was a constant stream of visitors eager to speak to her. To one less virtuous the popularity would have been dangerous. But this chosen soul considered herself only as the instrument of the Child Jesus. Reflecting on the humiliations and even contempt the saints had to bear, she longed for suffering that she might become a saint. In her desire to be away from the flattery and notice of which she was the object, she longed for some affliction which might serve as an excuse for her to be free from any office or honor in the community. Yet always she was submissive to the Divine Will. Never very strong, her health began to fail and though she urged her fainting body on to the fulfillment of her

duties, shortly after the community moved to Oak Lane, she completely broke down and was found to be in an advanced stage of pernicious anemia. Years before she had offered herself to God as a victim for sinners, especially for His anointed ones, and now, triumphing over nature, she heroically renewed her offering in the midst of excruciating physical pains and anguish of soul which were her portion during the last months of her life.

The community could ill afford to lose one of its members who was so devoted to its interests. Sr. Stanislaus had many gifts of nature as well as of grace. No one ever saw her without being impressed by her angelic countenance which reflected innocence, simplicity and sweetness. Though so childlike in spirit, she had a mature poise of character and sound judgment joined to quick perceptions. Her capacity for all kinds of work, mental and manual, was remarkable, and her cheerful, kindly spirit made her always ready for anything that was asked or needed. She loved her community and was always ready to sacrifice herself for its good.

But no one is necessary for God's works, and sacrifice and annihilation glorify Him most. Novena after novena was made for Sr. Stanislaus' recovery. The community hoped that Little Teresa would obtain this favor for them but the Divine Lover was perfecting His little spouse and, as her body was consumed by fearful sufferings, love was consuming the soul of the little victim so completely that she would cry out: "O, my dear little Jesus, why don't you come! Come quickly!" Yet she would often say: "I do not wish to go until I have suffered all that He wills." The attending physician said he never could have believed a person could suffer so much and so patiently.

During her last two weeks she could not even swallow medicine, yet daily she was able to receive Holy Viaticum. And thus the desire of her youth, to live on the Blessed Sacrament alone, was fulfilled. At length, after a terrible and prolonged agony, her spirit flew to the eternal embrace of the Beloved for Whom alone she lived, on Friday, March 10, 1911 -- at that time observed as the Feast of the Lance and Nails.

Beautiful in life, she seemed even more so in death. Multitudes came to look upon her during the three days her body remained in the Choir, and all were moved to devotion. She was so beautiful that many thought they beheld a waxen figure and not a real person. There was no feeling of death in the house; it seemed as if Heaven had touched the earth and it was a happiness to pray near and to her. Her body lay in the midst of an abundance of calla lilies sent by friends, but she was the fairest lily of them all. The calla lily was her favorite flower for she said: "You can look right down into its heart and there are no folds for insects to hide in." To her it was the symbol of truth, and she wished her soul might be as pure and open to the eyes of God and her superiors.

Many were those who gave testimony to the influence for good which "The Little Flower of Philadelphia," as they lovingly called her, had exercised over them, and they came to ask her powerful intercession before God.

Sr. Stanislaus had corresponded with Mother Agnes of Jesus of Lisieux Carmel, the sister of her beloved Little Teresa, whom she too called her "Little Mother". Her zeal for the propagation of devotion to the Little Flower also brought her into contact with Rev. T.N. Taylor, translator and editor of the autobiography of the Saint, who included the letter informing him of Sr. Stanislaus' death in the earlier editions of the autobiography. Replying to that letter, Fr. Taylor wrote in part: "...I feel quite stunned at the rapidity with which the end has come. Had I but known I should have loved to write her and give her my messages before Jesus plucked His flower...How deeply I cherish her sweet memory. I believe she is already with the Therese she fondly loved. Surely, surely this is one of the 'legion des petites victimes d'amour' that the Angel of Lisieux longed to lead to God."

Sr. Stanislaus was the first of the community to die and the fragrant memory of her life of heroic virtue and blessed death still perfume the cloisters of Philadelphia Carmel and are and will continue to be an inspiration to coming generations to strive after the better things and to immolate themselves generously upon the Altar of the Divine Heart of Jesus by prayer and sacrifice.

During her last illness, Sr. Stanislaus had promised to help her dear community from heaven but she who had won victory through suffering did not seek to remove that purification from those she loved. The fatigue and anxiety of her illness had completely exhausted the strength of the dear Mother whose tender heart had shared all the pains of her child. A month after her death Mother Gertrude's weak frame gave way and she gradually grew worse. Tuberculosis had set in and she was compelled to spend the greater part of the remaining two years of her life in bed. However, she continued to direct her community with characteristic self-forgetfulness and heroic fortitude until in October, 1912, her longing to be relieved of the office of Prioress was granted by her ecclesiastical superior. Mother Beatrix, in whose hands she had made her profession, and who had accompanied the foundresses to Philadelphia, came from Boston to be the Prioress of the little community.

Mother Beatrix occupies a unique place in the formation and development of Carmel in the United States. After being Prioress of the Carmel of Baltimore, where she trained many future foundresses of various Carmels, she was appointed by Cardinal Gibbons to make the foundation of Boston in 1890. Among her companions were the future Foundresses and first Prioresses of the Carmels of Philadelphia and Santa Clara, California. She built the monastery in Boston and, as already stated, accompanied to Philadelphia the little group who formed the nucleus of the new community, remaining with them several months. When she returned in 1912, to relieve the dying Prioress of her responsibility, she came only to remain until the struggling little community was firmly established. On the expiration of her term as Prioress in 1918, her presence was desired by the young community of the Carmel of Wheeling, W. Va., where she remained two years, returning to Philadelphia to lend her invaluable aid during the completion of the construction of the monastery. Elected again as Prioress, she built the enclosure wall which fulfilled the requirements for Papal enclosure and having, by Apostolic Indult, become a permanent

member of the Philadelphia community, she was the first Carmelite nun in the United States to make Solemn Vows when the community was admitted to that privilege in 1925. In 1930, when eighty-four years of age, the Rt. Rev. John F. O'Hern, of Rochester, N.Y., asked her to make a foundation in that city. In spite of age and infirmities, she complied with the request with the enthusiasm of a youthful pioneer. She governed the Rochester community for nine years, until her holy death in 1939.

With the simplicity of a truly magnanimous soul Mother Gertrude welcomed the opportunity of becoming once more a little child. After she resigned the office of Prioress, her daughters beheld her a living exemplification of the virtues she had tried to inculcate and they marveled at her humility, obedience and simplicity. Always a lover of poverty and detachment, she begged that all the little articles reserved for her use be taken away and when she died it was difficult to find anything that had been hers, to give to her dear ones who asked for a little remembrance.

During the last months of her life her bed became the Altar upon which the victim was sacrificed, but a joyful, willing victim praising God all the time. In the severest paroxysms of pain she would cry out: "More, O Lord, more suffering, if I can glorify Thee and help souls!" When the sisters would say: "Poor Rev. Mother, you suffer so much!" she would exclaim: "No. Do not say so, but -- happy Rev. Mother, for the Lord could not show more love for me than to make me like Himself. What I must do now is praise Him in my suffering. . . I hope never to reach the point where I would say: 'Enough, Lord!' I wish always to say: 'Yet more, O Lord! Yet more!'"

When through intensity of pain, involuntary cries would escape her, she would make an oblation of them to the Lord, saying: "Dear Jesus! I offer You this day every mean and cry of my poor human nature for Your praise and glory."

One day she said: "How good the Lord is to make me like Himself, for I can say with Him: 'From the crown of my head to the sole of my feet, there is no soundness in me.'" And it was true. She suffered severe pains in every part of her body. Open wounds caused by the prolonged stay in bed, notwithstanding the loving care which had been given her; racking cough; oppressed breathing; swelling limbs; burning fever gave her no respite. But she praised God more and more for every pain.

When asked to assist the community after her death, she replied: "I shall always be with them. In the eyes of the world my work in the Foundation has been a failure, but what does it matter if all my nuns become saints. I believe that when I get to Heaven my mission will be to draw the community to perfection."

It was on February 7, 1913, First Friday and, at that time, the Feast of the Crowning with Thorns of her King and Spouse, that she who had worn the royal diadem of suffering with Him was found worthy to receive from Him a crown of glory in His Heavenly Kingdom.



To the unspiritual mind it would seem that Mother Gertrude had failed in the work God gave her to do for, notwithstanding her years of labor and suffering and the strenuous efforts she made to have a regular monastery, she died without accomplishing it. But God's ways are not ours. She built up the spiritual edifice and established it on lasting foundations which is proved by the true spirit of Carmel which exists in this community. This is her best eulogy. God denied her the satisfaction of erecting the material building, and even made it impossible to use the plans which she had drawn so efficiently, and over which she had spent so much time and labor even when very weak. But her intercession obtained what she could not effect upon earth and her children trod the cloisters erected by her prayers.

A few months after Mother Gertrude's death the community cooperated with the Carmel of Baltimore in the Foundation of the Carmel of Wheeling, W. Va. Sister Teresa of Jesus, the first choir nun professed in the Philadelphia Carmel, and a most valuable member of the community, became one of the foundresses of the new Carmel. She was Prioress of the Wheeling Carmel when, in 1929, after a most painful illness, heroically borne with characteristic cheerfulness, she was called to her eternal reward.

Late in 1913 news was brought to Carmel that a legacy of \$150,000 had been left to the Archbishop for the building of their chapel. For the little community, so accustomed to the Cross, the news seemed almost too good to be true. Assured of its veracity a Te Deum was chanted. Congratulations poured in from interested friends but two weeks later the Archbishop called to say there had been a mistake. The money was intended to bring a community of Perpetual Adoration to the city. The disappointment was accepted cheerfully and, again, the Te Deum was chanted to thank God for the Cross, always His best gift. The incident seemed to arouse sympathy in the hearts of the friends of Carmel who strove to help the nuns according to their modest means. Although a recent appeal for funds had proved unsuccessful, the dear Archbishop, a true spiritual Father, in order to compensate as far as he was able for the disappointment, allowed the community to borrow sufficient money to begin the building of the chapel, confident that if the work was begun, Divine Providence would provide for its completion. His prediction proved true. The chapel and monastery of Philadelphia Carmel were not to be credited to the donation of the wealthy but to the numerous small alms of the working class, often made at great personal sacrifice.

Ground was broken for the chapel and first section of the monastery in October 1914, and before the dedication of the chapel in September, 1915, the completed part of the building remained open for inspection for several days. Thirty thousand visitors proved eager to get a glimpse of the monastery which would be forever closed to the public after the ceremony of the dedication.

The chapel, styled by the architects as a veritable gem of Italian Byzantine architecture, is built entirely of local rubble stone with trimming of white terra cotta, the roof being of Spanish tile. The facade is distinguished by a monumental porch of

very rich design, ornamented with a great deal of old Christian symbolism. The structural parts of the interior are of terra cotta and a pleasing gray brick. Over the reredos of the main altar of Botticino marble is an exquisite mural painting of the Sacred Heart. The beautiful shrines of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel and St. Joseph, which terminate the side aisles, are carrara marble statues with a background of gold mosaic. Large terra cotta medallions of St. Teresa of Jesus and St. John of the Cross are directly over the black iron grilles which flank the main altar. The seating capacity of 300 frequently proves insufficient for ceremonies and public devotions, when the attending crowds pack the aisles and even the large sanctuary. Beautiful gold shrines of the Infant Jesus of Prague and of the Holy Face are suspended from the sanctuary walls.

The chapel, designated as a semi-public oratory, soon became a haven of devotion and peace for an ever-increasing number of people. Situated at first in a quiet suburb, the rapid development of the surrounding neighborhood made it an outstanding landmark at the very busy intersection of several important streets.

Six months after the dedication of the chapel, the Divine Gardener plucked His third flower from this fair garden of souls. The hidden little violet, Sister Mary of St. Joseph, the successor of Sister Stanislaus in the office of Sub-Prioress and at the Turn, the self-styled "agent of Little Teresa," consumed more by the vehemence of her love for God than by disease, yielded her pure soul to her Creator on the fifth anniversary of the death of her childhood playmate and sister in religion.

Dedicated to our Blessed Mother shortly after her baptism, Sr. Mary was pre-eminently a Child of Mary and her devotion to Our Lady became the outstanding characteristic of her spiritual life. Early in her religious life she made the Act of Consecration as a Slave of Our Lady, and it would seem scarcely possible for one to live more fully in the spirit of this slavery than she did. She acted always in Her and through Her, constantly turning to Her for help. She consulted Her in doubts and difficulties and kept always in Her holy company as a little child with its mother. Mary was her "Star" and she followed Her light always.

Fired with apostolic zeal, she longed to win souls for Christ and envied the missionaries who had gone to China. "At least," she once wrote, "I hope I shall be crowned as a Chinese martyr in desire." This apostolic zeal found some outlet in her duties at the Turn, where she tried to walk in the footsteps of Sr. Stanislaus by spreading devotion to "Little Teresa" to whose way of abandonment and spirit of littleness she felt strongly attracted, longing to become one of her "legion of little souls."

She worked zealously at the Crusade of Prayer, inaugurated in France in 1912 to obtain the speedy beatification of Little Teresa, and rejoiced to be able to send to Lisieux a considerable list of prayers and good works offered for this purpose. Then she began to feel strongly urged to do everything in her power to make Little Teresa known, that her beatification might be hastened, being convinced that the little Saint would in return help the community both spiritually and temporally. With permission of

superiors a large stock of books, pictures, leaflets, etc., was procured from Lisieux. Catalogues were printed and sent over the country to various religious institutions. Orders began to pour in and Sr. Mary worked indefatigably to fill them, rejoicing that Little Teresa's name was carried all over the United States. From every state and territory, even from the Hawaiian Islands, came requests for various articles in connection with the little Saint. The Carmel of Lisieux made this monastery a kind of depot in this country for the different articles relative to the devotion to the Little Flower. There was little profit in it for the community, but it was a joy to see the devotion to their dear saintly Sister of Lisieux spreading.

Sr. Mary was truly "The Agent of Little Teresa." She felt herself interiorly urged to accomplish her little mission and regardless of her delicate health she pushed on. Little Teresa became part of her life and, feeling her time was limited, she wished to make known everywhere, as far as possible, Carmel's "Little Flower." She rejoiced greatly when the Carmel of Lisieux, having received flags of many nations to be used at the Shrine of the Little Flower, expressed a desire to have the American flag sent from this Carmel and the devoted clients of the Little Flower in Philadelphia. She asked permission to engage her brother to procure a most handsome silk flag and, shortly before her death, when very ill, she arranged to have it sent to Lisieux. The nuns of Lisieux wrote that our flag of the "Land of the Free and the Home of the Brave" was the most beautiful they received. On the standard was a silver plate bearing the inscription: "Love and gratitude to Sister Teresa of the Child Jesus from her clients of Philadelphia, Penna., U.S.A."

A passionate lover of solitude, she rejoiced when illness forced her to rest in March, 1915, and like St. Teresa hailed with joy the sign of her approaching end. The rest failing to help her, she was allowed to resume her duties at the Turn where she intensely gave her last bit of strength to the continuance of her task and, faithful to the end, the Little Agent arranged everything pertaining to her duties with such good order that when she was taken with her final illness the Sister who replaced her continued the work with ease.

The fire of Divine Love which was consuming her increased her ardent longing for Heaven, yet she declared she was resigned to live until the end of the world if God willed it. Although only in the early stages of tuberculosis, the love and longing of her heart for the Divine Bridegroom hastened His coming. She who had, with the permission of her superiors, offered her life to save a soul in great peril was a willing victim of love, seeking no relief or alleviation in her sufferings because she wished to be like her Crucified Spouse.

Always humble and retired, Sister Mary had a very lowly opinion of herself. She wanted to live hidden in God but He permitted others should see the virtue her humility would have concealed. In a letter to the Prioress after her death, a holy priest who knew her well said: "She was the nearest approach to

an angel on earth that I knew; the very thought of her was enough to tinge any other thoughts with the radiance of Heaven. She little realized in her cloistered solitude how often her heroic, penitential, prayerful and seraphic life made others blush for their own clumsy, niggard service of God...she has been an inspiration to me."

In 1918 this Carmel lost its second saintly Archbishop and Superior, the Most Rev. Edmond F. Prendergast. The paternal solicitude with which this beloved prelate cared for Carmel equalled that of his predecessor, Archbishop Ryan, who had brought the nuns to his diocese. The sorrow of the community was sweetly assuaged by the appointment of their dear friend, the Most Rev. Dennis J. Dougherty, Bishop of Buffalo, to the See of Philadelphia. Archbishop, later Cardinal Dougherty, like his worthy predecessors, reserved for himself the care of Carmel. For thirty-three years, until his death at the age of eight-four, May 31, 1951, notwithstanding his tremendous responsibilities and incessant demands on his time, His Eminence was never too busy for all that concerned Carmel. His all-embracing solicitude safeguarded anything that might tend to hinder the observance or weaken the spirit of the Rule, yet he never descended to the level of the trivial. For thirty-three years mutual love and veneration wove his name into the history of Carmel.

His Eminence interviewed the applicants for admission with paternal cordiality and keen spiritual discernment. Under his direction the building of the monastery was completed and the enclosure wall erected. He presided at most of the greater ceremonies in the chapel and manifested a special joy in celebrating Solemn Pontifical Mass on the last days of the Solemn Triduums, held in 1923 in honor of the beatification and in 1925 of the canonization of the Little Flower. All the services of these Triduums were attended by great crowds filled with the utmost enthusiasm and devotion. A large picture of the saint, painted by her sister Celine, was artistically arranged in the sanctuary and thousands of roses made by the Saint's devoted clients adorned the sanctuary and chapel. A side chapel in honor of St. Teresa of the Child Jesus was erected the year of her canonization and many priests clients sought the privilege of saying Mass at this shrine.

The building of the enclosure wall fulfilled the last condition required by the Sacred Canons in the Rescript, sent from Rome for the Foundation of the monastery, and on the Feast of their holy Father and Patron, St. Joseph, March 19, 1925, thirteen members of the community, including the seventy-nine-year-old Prioress, made their profession of Solemn Vows in the presence of His Eminence who offered the Holy Mass and presided at the ceremony. Thus was restored to the order of Carmel in the United States the great privilege of making Solemn Vows. This event proved the beginning of a new era in the religious profession of nuns in the U.S.

By 1927 the generosity of the friends of Carmel, and the indemnity paid by the city for opening 66th Avenue through the monastery grounds, had relieved the community of the burden of debt. This made possible the consecration of the chapel as the crowning blessing of Carmel's twenty-five years in Philadelphia.



That blessing was quickly followed by sorrow when a week later the beloved chaplain, Rev. John J. Moore, was called to his eternal reward. Father Moore's role in spreading the devotion to the Little Flower was an important one. Shortly after his appointment as chaplain he began to study the life of Sister Teresa of the Child Jesus and soon recognized the vast spiritual treasures hidden in her Little Way. For nearly a quarter of a century Fr. Moore's Sunday afternoon sermons attracted many people to Carmel. He taught them not merely to pray to the Little Flower for temporal favors but to strive to imitate her and to make her Little Way their way of loving and serving the good God. He rejoiced to see the rapid progress of the canonization process. Sr. Stanislaus and Sr. Mary, who had spent themselves in laboring for the cause, did not live to see the Saint glorified on earth but her zealous herald, Fr. Moore, rejoiced to proclaim her glory for two years to ever-increasing crowds of devoted clients, and many were the souls drawn to walk in the Little Way which had led her to the heights of sanctity.

The last of the principal promoters of the cause of the Little Flower at this center of devotion to her was the demure little extern who, for sixteen years as lay extern and twelve as an out-sister, served the community and visitors to Carmel with self-effacing devotedness.

Mary Reilly, the little "half-nun" as His Eminence Cardinal Dougherty used to call her, who later became Sr. Teresita of the Child Jesus, rivaled Sr. Stanislaus and Sr. Mary in her devotion to the Little Flower. It was so woven into her being that her zeal for spreading the devotion counted no labor too strenuous to gain that end. The labor of love generously accomplished by the dauntless Turn-Sisters, and their devoted extern, supplemented the ardent preaching of Fr. Moore and was a tremendous influence in propagating the devotion to St. Teresa of the Child Jesus.

After the beatification of the Little Flower in 1923 religious articles pertaining to her became more universally obtainable and it was no longer necessary for the monastery to supply them. However, relics and leaflets of the Saint are still in constant demand and thousands are distributed yearly. Until 1956 there was a perpetual novena to the Little Flower every Sunday afternoon, and annual devotions are now held in preparation for her Feast. Letters continue to come in requesting prayers to the Saint or telling of favors obtained through her intercession.

Almost simultaneous with the mature fructification of Philadelphia Carmel in the Foundations sent to Louisville, Ky., and Rochester, N.Y., in 1930, in response to the request of the Rt. Rev. John Floersch, Bishop of Louisville, and Rt. Rev. John Francis O'Hern, Bishop of Rochester, occurred the death of the last of the foundresses, Sr. Xavier of the Angels. Sr. Xavier's vocation was the primary factor in the establishment of Carmel in Philadelphia and her hidden life and long years of suffering were crowned by a most holy death.

Devotion to the Infant Jesus of Prague is so widespread today that it is difficult to realize that only two decades ago it was confined to the few. The Little King

reigns in all Carmels but as devotion to Him was the very warp and woof of the spiritual life of Sr. Stanislaus, the community could not fail to imbibe her spirit.

About 1932, when so many were suffering from the great financial depression, the Prioress felt urged to propagate the devotion to the Infant Jesus of Prague, confident the Little King would not fail to keep His promise of blessing those who honored Him. Those who asked the prayers of the community were urged to pray with the nuns to the Infant Jesus. Some small imported statues of the Infant, which had been sold at the Turn, were no longer available and efforts to procure similar ones and other articles of devotion, medals, pictures, etc., proved unsuccessful. The Little King had no place in the catalogues of religious goods supply houses. A prominent firm agreed to make small statues for the monastery, but did not list them. Those who prayed to the Infant Jesus desired to have His image in their homes and hundreds of the statues made for Carmel were sold. Within a short time, orders began to pour in not only for small statues but for the large dressed ones for churches, institutions and homes. Churches began to have public devotions in honor of the Infant Jesus of Prague. Once kindled, the tiny spark of devotion spread like wildfire and was soon happily lost in the conflagration of loving confidence which leaped up to the throne of a Sovereign Creator ruling the hearts He made by the Universal Kingship of His Divine Infancy.

In addition to the devotions to the Infant Jesus of Prague and to the Little Flower, Philadelphia Carmel has also promoted the other devotions of Carmel, particularly devotion to the Holy Face, the Holy Name, Our Lady of Mt. Carmel, Our Mother St. Teresa of Avila and St. Albert of Sicily. The Lamp of Love burns perpetually before the picture of the Holy Face for those who thus wish to honor the Sacred Countenance of Our Divine Saviour. Holy Name Gospels are constantly being distributed. Many are the favors attributed to the wearing of the Holy Name Gospel in honor of JESUS, the name above every other name. The annual public novena to Our Lady of Mt. Carmel, for her Feast July 16, attracts ever-increasing numbers of the faithful, regardless of the inconvenience of extremely warm weather. Year after year the same devoted children return to honor Our Lady of Mt. Carmel. Whenever novena devotions for the great St. Teresa of Avila, Our Mother and Foundress or St. Teresa of the Child Jesus (The Little Flower) are conducted, they are always well attended. Water blessed with the relic of St. Albert for the use of the sick is always kept on hand at the Turn for those who request it, and countless are the physical and spiritual favors attributed to the intercession of this Carmelite Saint and drinking the Blessed Water.

The third appeal for a Foundation came from the Rt. Rev. Thomas Toolen, Bishop of Mobile, in 1943, and was made possible by the financial aid of the Rt. Rev. Richard Cushing, then Auxiliary Bishop of Boston (later Cardinal), the great friend and benefactor of the Missions.

After World War II the poverty-stricken religious throughout the world turned to the United States for help and it was only natural the suffering Carmelites should seek the aid of their more fortunate Sisters in this country. By cooperating with the

Committee for Foreign Relief of the Adoration Society of Philadelphia, this Carmel had the consolation of having the very numerous appeals for help from Carmelites throughout the world receive generous response. For this stupendous act of charity, Mrs. Sylvester A. Lowery, President of the Society and Chairman of the Committee for Foreign Relief, received a special Document of Affiliation to the Order of Discalced Carmelites from our Very Rev. Fr. General when she made her Holy Year pilgrimage to Rome in 1950. Through Mrs. Lowery, Carmel became a center of devotion for the Adoration Society of Philadelphia in 1943.

The year 1952 marked the Golden Jubilee of Carmel in Philadelphia. All of the foundresses had gone to their eternal reward and the older nuns who had shared the rigorous hardships of the earlier days in the first two temporary locations had either joined them or were building up the traditions of Carmel in the daughter houses of Louisville, Ky., Rochester, N.Y. and Mobile, Alabama. A younger generation had matured and in true Teresian spirit observed the Jubilee with a triduum of Solemn Masses ending on the Feast of their Holy Mother St. Teresa of Avila. His Excellency, the Most Rev. John P. O'Hara, Archbishop (later Cardinal) of Philadelphia officiated at the Mass of the Feast and expressed his appreciation and that of the Clergy and laity of the Archdiocese for the contemplative life of Carmel so necessary for the spiritual vitality and growth of the Church. Representing the Discalced Carmelite Order at the Jubilee Triduum was the Most Rev. Patrick Shanley, D.D., O.C.D. Bishop of Infanta, Philippines, the Mission assigned to the Washington Province of the Discalced Carmelite Fathers.

By 1958 the community was again ready for expansion when a former Auxiliary Bishop of Philadelphia, the Most Rev. Gerald O'Hara, D.D. Archbishop of Savannah-Atlanta, invited them to make a foundation in the city of Savannah, Georgia.

The Fourth Centenary of the founding of the Reform of Carmel was celebrated by the entire Order throughout the world in 1962 and all monasteries were asked to have a solemn commemoration of the founding of the Monastery of St. Joseph in Avila on August 24, the anniversary day. The occasion was fittingly observed by Philadelphia Carmel with a Pontifical High Mass in the evening including a solemn outdoor procession of the officiating and attending prelates, clergy and seminarians. The Centenary was further commemorated by a triduum of Solemn Masses ending on the Feast of St. Teresa of Avila, October 15th.

Philadelphia Carmel has been continually blessed with vocations and in addition to the foundations has been able to help other Carmels in need of personnel with temporary and permanent transfers. This continuity of vocations redounds not only to the credit of this Carmel but also to the deep religious spirit of the Catholics of the Philadelphia archdiocese, the main source of these vocations.

Words can only describe the external establishment, development and expansion of the seed of contemplative life planted in the heart of a school girl seven decades ago. Who can unveil the glory given to God by the incense of loving prayer and praise unceasingly rising from the hearts whose youthful ardor glows and grows in the ageless

Furnace of Divine Charity because one girl chose to lead a life "hidden with Christ, in God"?

Thus the work of Carmel in this city of Brotherly Love continues as a hidden force in the mission of the Church. The importance of this life is nowhere more forcefully expressed than in the Second Vatican Council document "Decree on the Adaptation and Renewal of the Religious Life" which states: "Communities which are entirely dedicated to contemplation, so that their members in solitude and silence, with constant prayer and penance willingly undertaken, occupy themselves with God alone, retain at all times, no matter how pressing the needs of the active apostolate may be, an honorable place in the Mystical Body of Christ, whose members do not all have the same function.' (Rom. 12,4) For these offer to God a sacrifice of praise which is outstanding. Moreover the manifold results of their holiness lends luster to the People of God which is inspired by their example and which gains new members by their apostolate which is as effective as it is hidden. Thus they are revealed to be a glory of the Church and a wellspring of heavenly graces."

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